

Application of:

Group Art Unit: 2652

Examiner: Not Assigned

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Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.56 and 1.97-1.98, Applicants hereby submit the attached Form PTO-1449, which may be deemed material to the examination of the above-identified application.

In accordance with the waiver dated July 11, 2003, issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, copies of U.S. patents and published applications cited herein have been omitted since this application has been filed after June 30, 2003.


These documents were cited in an European Search Report in the European Patent Application related to the above-identified U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/678,069. Also, for the Examiner's convenience, attached is a copy of the European Search Report in which these documents were cited.

Since the present Information Disclosure Statement is being filed prior to issuance of a first Office Action on the merits, no certification under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(e) or fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(b) is required.

The Examiner is requested to consider the documents listed in the Form PTO-1449 in connection with the above-identified application and to return a copy of Form PTO-1449 to the Applicants with the Examiner's initials in the spaces provided.

Submission of this Information Disclosure Statement does not constitute an admission by the Applicants as to the materiality of the attached documents to the application, nor do the Applicants waive any right to challenge the validity of the documents as prior art should such action be deemed appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,


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Dated: April 22, 2004

Date
Considered